

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 were examined and reported in the Office Action. Claims 1, 10 and 11 are rejected. Claims 2 and 12 are canceled. Claims 1, 3, 11 and 13 are amended. Claims 1, 3-11 and 13-23 remain.

Applicant requests reconsideration of the application in view of the following remarks.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

It is asserted in the Office Action that claims 1, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 5,697,067 issued to Graham ("Graham"). It is asserted in the Office Action that claims 2 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including their respective base claims. Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 2. And, Applicant has amended claim 11 to include the limitations of claim 12. Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1 and 11 are allowable over Graham.

Additionally, Applicant's claim 10 directly depends on amended claim 1. Therefore, Applicant's claim 10 is also allowable over Graham for the same reason above.

Therefore, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejections for claims 1, 10 and 11 are moot.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's assertion that claims 2-9 and 12-23 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As asserted above, Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitations of canceled claim 2, and amended claim 11 to include the limitations of canceled claim 12.

Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1, 3-11, and 13-23, as they now stand, are allowable for the reasons given above.

CONCLUSION

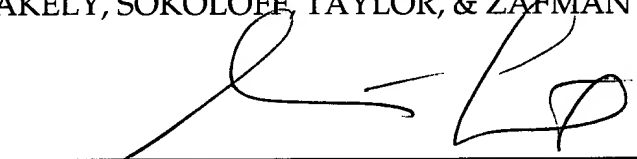
In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that claims 1, 3-11 and 13-23 patentably define the subject invention over the cited references of record, and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would be useful in moving the case forward, he is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR, & ZAFMAN LLP

Dated: September 9, 2005

By: 
Steven Laut, Reg. No. 47,736

12400 Wilshire Boulevard
Seventh Floor
Los Angeles, California 90025
(310) 207-3800

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on September 9, 2005.


Jean Svoboda